FIRST COMICS
WARP
AUG. $1.00
NO. 15
$1.25 CANADA
© 1984 FIRST COMICS, INC.
BINGHAM
GUSTOVICH '83

warped words

c/o FIRST COMICS,
1014 DAVIS STREET, EVANSTON, ILLINOIS 60201

Dear Mike,

Warp #11 was excellent but I hope Lord Cumulus doesn't stay on Earth. That would be a tragedy for you (because I would break your legs).

Jerry is a great replacement for Frank. His artwork almost surpasses Frank — that means they are equal — and Mike Gustovich's inks have never looked better.

Maurice Kelly
Baltimore, MD

As you can see from this issue, Cumulus's stay on Earth is pretty much over — for now. All the same, I'm glad you addressed your letter/threat to Mike, not me.

Gentlemen:

The cycle is complete ... the saga ended. For now. Take a deep breath, bow, and go back to work. "Diversions" is one of the most off-the-wall beginnings I've ever seen. Hapax Legomenon is a scream, keep him around, please.

It will be interesting to see Lord Cumulus adapt to himself ... but will he remain white? Come on ... give us the first Cumulus, the Negro Lord of Fen-Ra ... I miss him, and all the signs seem to point to his return.

Some of the subtle stuff this issue: the Nexus-like assassin, 35,000 years back pay (plus severance?). Can I hire on, this looks like fun. And the thought "There's no place like home." Shouldn't he have worn ruby slippers?

Charles B. Cockett Jr.
353 McComb Avenue
Cheyenne, WY 82007

What makes you think the black Cumulus was the first one?

As for Cumulus adapting, you raise an interesting point. He has finally reconciled himself to the fact that he is not David Carson; but, then, who is he? You'll see some interesting developments as the real (?) Lord Cumulus emerges during the next several issues.

Dear Editor,

Seeing as how #11 along with the two Warp Specials represented the 13th Warp issue and thus it's first anniversary (and First's first anniversary!), I thought that you might mark the occasion in some way. Little did I suspect that it would be by altering the mag's format (and that of the other First mag's too), and little did I suspect that I would not approve of your chosen "commemoration."

To be specific: (1) Put the lettercol at the back of the mag where it belongs (particularly since it contains the "next month" blurb). (2) Restore the lettercol to it's previous more-than-one-page length. (3) Lower the price to 50 cents and print it on Baxter paper.

Gosh, I was so upset about the form of the issue that it distracted me from the content. I did, however, notice that Outrider was more intriguing than the lead story. While Cumulus et al. are floundering around a bit (in three directions) trying to find a new dramatic course (even a new dramatic raison d'etre), Outrider is showing that Fen-Ra has much unexplored potential and that the concept of Fen-Ra/Cynosure/etc. may indeed be able to link up the First Universe. Let's hope that the so-far enigmatic Outrider series in fact has a coherent plan behind it and is not just dazzling us with genuine (as opposed to planned) confusion.

Oh, by the way, just kidding about (4) above. (Just to make sure you were paying attention.)

T.M. Maple
Toronto, Ontario

Your complaints have been referred to the former editor. (How's that for passing the buck?)

All kidding aside, the decision to put the lettercol on the inside front cover and change the ad placement was not an aesthetic one but an economical one. Without going into a long technical explanation (you'll just have to take my word for it), it's much less expensive to produce our books in this manner — thus enabling us to keep our prices down.

At any rate, you still get 28 pages of story and art, and we have no intentions of changing that.

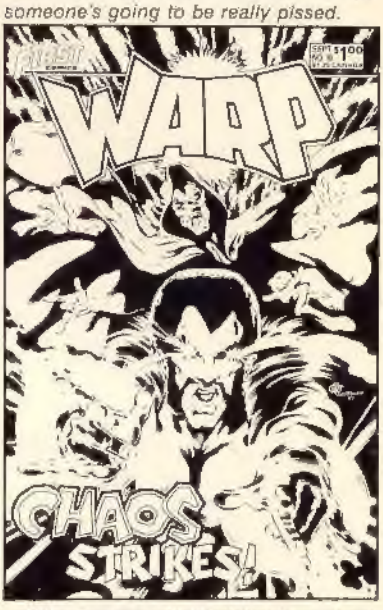
Dear Warped Ones:

Warp #11 sure lived up to its name! I like stories that make you have to read it more than once. This way I get to see more of the art and try to figure out just what the hell happens! But it was well worth it. A decent story from Peter Gillis, some excellent art from Jerry Bingham, and some nice inks by Mike Gustovich to complement Jerry's pencils. All of this made "Diversions" a very enjoyable — and interesting — story.

Then there is Outrider ... I was surprised. Absolutely surprised. I was surprised by how good the art was. Are you sure that this is pencilled *and* inked by Lenin Delsol?

Kevin T. Brown
7846F W. Lawrence Ave.
Norridge, IL 60656

Well, that's what he told us, and his name's on the check. So if he didn't ink it, someone's going to be really pissed.



NEXT MONTH: Cumulus has been ignoring his brother too long, and Chaos has been *very* busy in the mean time. Of course, all the Prince of Madness really needs is "A Night In Cynosure!" Meanwhile, Outrider discovers the secret of the Iron Star in "Eclipse!"

— Rick Oliver

Rick Obadiah, Publisher

Mike Gold, Managing Editor
Joe Staton, Art Director
Rick Oliver, Associate Editor
Alex Wald,
Production Coordinator

Richard Felber,
Business Manager
Ralph C. Musicant,
Operations Director
Kathy Kotsivas, Office Manager

WARP™ Vol. 1, No. 15, August 1984. Published by FIRST COMICS, INC., Mike Gold, President; Rick Obadiah, Secretary; Richard Felber, Treasurer; Kenneth F. Levin and Ralph C. Musicant, Directors. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 1014 Davis Street, Evanston, IL 60201. Published monthly, including Warp Specials. Copyright © 1984 First Comics, Inc. All rights reserved. Price: $1.00 in the U.S., $1.25 in Canada. Subscription rates for twelve issues: $12.00 in the U.S., $14.00 in Canada, and $29.00 foreign rate. All payments must be in U.S. funds. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this publication are entirely fictional. No actual persons, living or dead, without satiric content are intended or should be inferred. Or inferred, or inbred, or inhaled, or any of those other "in" words! Warp, Lord Cumulus, Chaos — Prince of Madness, Lugulbanda, Sargon — Mistress of War, Valaria, Symax, Outrider, The Faceless Ones, and all prominent characters featured in this issue are trademarks of First Comics, Inc. Engraved by Post Graphics.

Warp (ISSN-0746-6544) is published monthly for $12.00 per year by First Comics Inc., 1014 Davis Street, Evanston, IL 60201. Second class postage paid at Evanston, IL. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to Warp, c/o First Comics, Inc., 1014 Davis Street, Evanston, IL 60201.

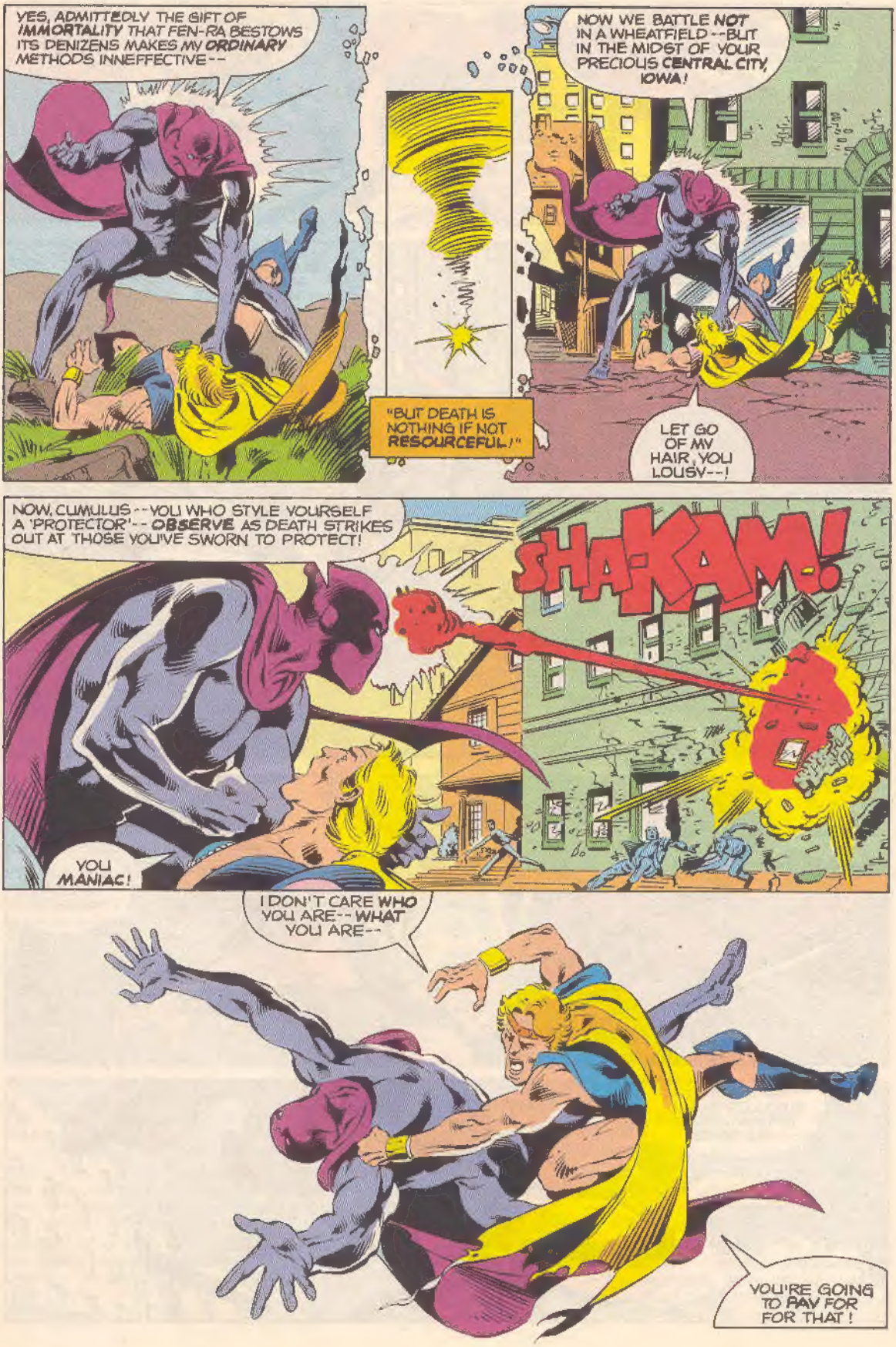
A FIRST COMICS PUBLISHING PRODUCTION

WARP
the DEATH of PRINCES!
AS PROTECTOR OF FEN-RA, LORD CUMULUS, YOU CAN DO GREAT THINGS. BUT THERE IS ONE THING YOU CANNOT DO--
--AND THAT IS DEFY THE HAND OF DEATH!
PETER B. GILLIS
STORY
JERRY BINGHAM
PICTURES
MIKE GUSTOVICH
INKS
RICK TAYLOR
LETTERS
JANICE COHEN
COLORS
RICK OLIVER
EDITOR
BASED ON CHARACTERS AND CONCEPTS CREATED BY
STUART GORDON AND BURY ST. EDMUND

THIS IS STUPID! THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS DEATH--I MEAN, AS A GUY WITH A SKULL AND A SCYTHE--!
THROUGHOUT THE AEONS AND UNIVERSES MEN HAVE SOUGHT TO DENY ME--YET IT AFFECTS ME NOT! I AM DEATH--AND I HAVE COME FOR YOU!
NO! YOU'RE NOT DEATH AND I'M NOT GOING TO DIE! THERE'S NO REASON FOR IT!
RATIONAL-IZATIONS ALWAYS DISSOLVE BEFORE DEATH!
WELL, FORGET IT! I DEFY YOU!
THE-OW!
YOU ARE INDEED MIGHTY LORD CUMULUS, BUT--
BUT YOU'RE JUST ANOTHER JERK! THAT'S ALL!
DO YOU HEAR ME??
I HEAR YOU.

YOU MAY DESTROY THE ENTIRE COSMOS BEFORE YOU AFFECT DEATH BY THE MEREST FRACTION CUMULUS!
YOU CANNOT KILL DEATH--YOU CANNOT WOUND DEATH--YOU CANNOT HALT DEATH!
LET'S JUST ADMIT--FOR THE SAKE OF ARGUEMENT--THAT YOU ARE DEATH--ANSWER ME THIS!
WHAM!
WHY ME -- WHY NOW?
I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW I WAS SICK!
EVEN DEATH OPERATES BY CAUSE AND EFFECT!
GOOD POINT!
BUT THERE IS A CAUSE! A VERY GOOD CAUSE--

DAVID CARSON DIED ON THIS PLANE* --AS IT CONFORMS TO THE LAW!
AND HIS SPIRIT FLED TO ANOTHER PLANE--AS IT CONFORMS TO THE LAW!
*IN WARP #3--RICK.
BUT NOW DAVID CARSON'S SPIRIT RETURNS TO THIS PLANE IN THE FORM OF LORD CUMULUS --
--AND THAT IS A GRIEVOUS VIOLATION OF THE LAW! I CANNOT ALLOW IT!
DEATH SHALL NOT BE DENIED!
NO! I WON'T BE CHEATED OUT OF MY LIFE!
I HAVE A RIGHT TO BE DAVID CARSON! I HAVE A RIGHT TO LIVE ON EARTH!
DEATH ENFOLDS YOU, CUMULUS! DEATH HAS YOU!
I AM LORD CUMULUS AND BY THE POWER VESTED IN ME --
I SHALL BE FREE!
BY HE WHO DREAMS-- THE BACK-LASH-- ALMOST TOO MUCH!


YES, ADMITTEDLY THE GIFT OF IMMORTALITY THAT FEN-RA BESTOWS ITS DENIZENS MAKES MY ORDINARY METHODS INNEFFECTIVE--
"BUT DEATH IS NOTHING IF NOT RESOURCEFUL!"
NOW WE BATTLE NOT IN A WHEATFIELD--BUT IN THE MIDST OF YOUR PRECIOUS CENTRAL CITY, IOWA!
LET GO OF MY HAIR, YOU LOUSY--!
NOW, CUMULUS--YOU WHO STYLE YOURSELF A 'PROTECTOR'--OBSERVE AS DEATH STRIKES OUT AT THOSE YOU'VE SWORN TO PROTECT!
SHA-KAM-!
YOU MANIAC!
I DON'T CARE WHO YOU ARE--WHAT YOU ARE--
YOU'RE GOING TO PAY FOR FOR THAT!

AND LORD CUMULUS IS--
--JUST THE MAN TO MAKE YOU!
HAH! MISSED!
GIVE IT UP, CUMULUS! IT IS INEVITABLE!
NOTHING IS INEVITABLE MONSTER--
--SAVE THAT LORD CUMULUS SHALL TRIUMPH OVER ALL ODDS!

FIRST NOTES

SUBMITTING SUBMISSIONS

Recently I've noticed — with a combination of comradeship and sarcastic glee — that my fellow editors at most of the other comics companies have been having exactly the same problem I've been having, at least in one specific area.

We're all getting deluged with submissions from would-be writers and artists.

Now I don't want to bum you nouveau-Byrnes out, but I've got to say this: of the two dozen or more serious submissions First Comics receives each week, at least 23 are bottom-drawer.

If you want to send us your stuff, please remember the following points:

1) Your work must be really fantastic. It is not good enough to look at the worst stuff on the stands and say, "I can do better than this."

2) Do not enclose originals — first-class photocopies are preferable. If you follow all the rules, you may get your stuff back eventually, but do not risk your originals.

3) Writers: don't send us proposals the length of the Manhattan telephone directory. Keep them down to three double-spaced pages, outlining the basic concept, each of the major characters, and the first dozen issues. Full scripts are not necessary. Proposals for stories involving already-published characters will not be read; in case any of the writers working with us get hit by a truck, I've already got at least three people in mind for replacement.

4) Artists: sending us pretty pictures isn't enough. We need to see a few pages of sample continuity. Show us samples of each stage: uninked pencils, uncolored inks. Show your work to your friends first and get their honest opinions. Show your stuff to your friendly neighborhood comics shop owner — some of the best referrals we've received come from shop owners.

5) Enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope for the return of your work. Otherwise you won't get it back.

6) Before you send it, think twice — is it really, *really* good?

7) Be prepared to wait at least six months for a response. We honestly get that many unsolicited submissions, and going through that stuff (referred to in the trade as the "slush pile") is a low priority; getting out our comics is always our highest priority.

8) Don't be disappointed if you get a form letter back, with various observations and tips checked off. Again, we simply do not have time to write everybody an individual letter.

9) Would-be artists should address their samples to **Joe Staton** (don't hit me, Joe! Please don't hit me!); writers should send their stuff to me.

10) Don't call us asking if we've received your submissions, or if we've read it or liked it. When we do have time to get to your stuff, I'd rather get it than tell you about why we don't have time to do it in the first place. Besides, 95% of those calls don't get past Ivy Graham, our crack sanity-control engineer.

11) Better — and faster — still: go to one of the comics conventions we attend and show us your work. You'll get an instant response — possibly a bit abrupt, and I apologize for that, but it sure beats waiting six months.

12) First Comics assumes absolutely no responsibility whatsoever for your unsolicited submission. You're sending it at your own risk.

If it sounds like I'm being overly harsh, well, maybe so. Being a comics professional is a lot like being an actor: for every job opening there's a thousand potentially talented newcomers waiting to claw their way in. It takes years of sweat, labor and personal sacrifice to become good enough to even audition, and it takes a few more years to hone your skills. Deadline pressure is intense, and unless you are both fantastic and fast you'll probably make more money doing something you wouldn't enjoy half as much.

It's a dirty little job, but somebody's got to do it.

— Mike Gold

FIRST IN APRIL!

American Flagg! #11: Sheiskopf is in, Ironheart is deactivated, Reuben's on the offensive and Raul has taken to arms — all as **Howard Chaykin** introduces ... the Videorangers!

E-Man #17: Kitty Porn and Ford Fairmont return! Teddy Q. is kidnapped! And E-Man and Nova Kane undertake their most dangerous mission yet: Smeltquest! Will comics ever be the same?

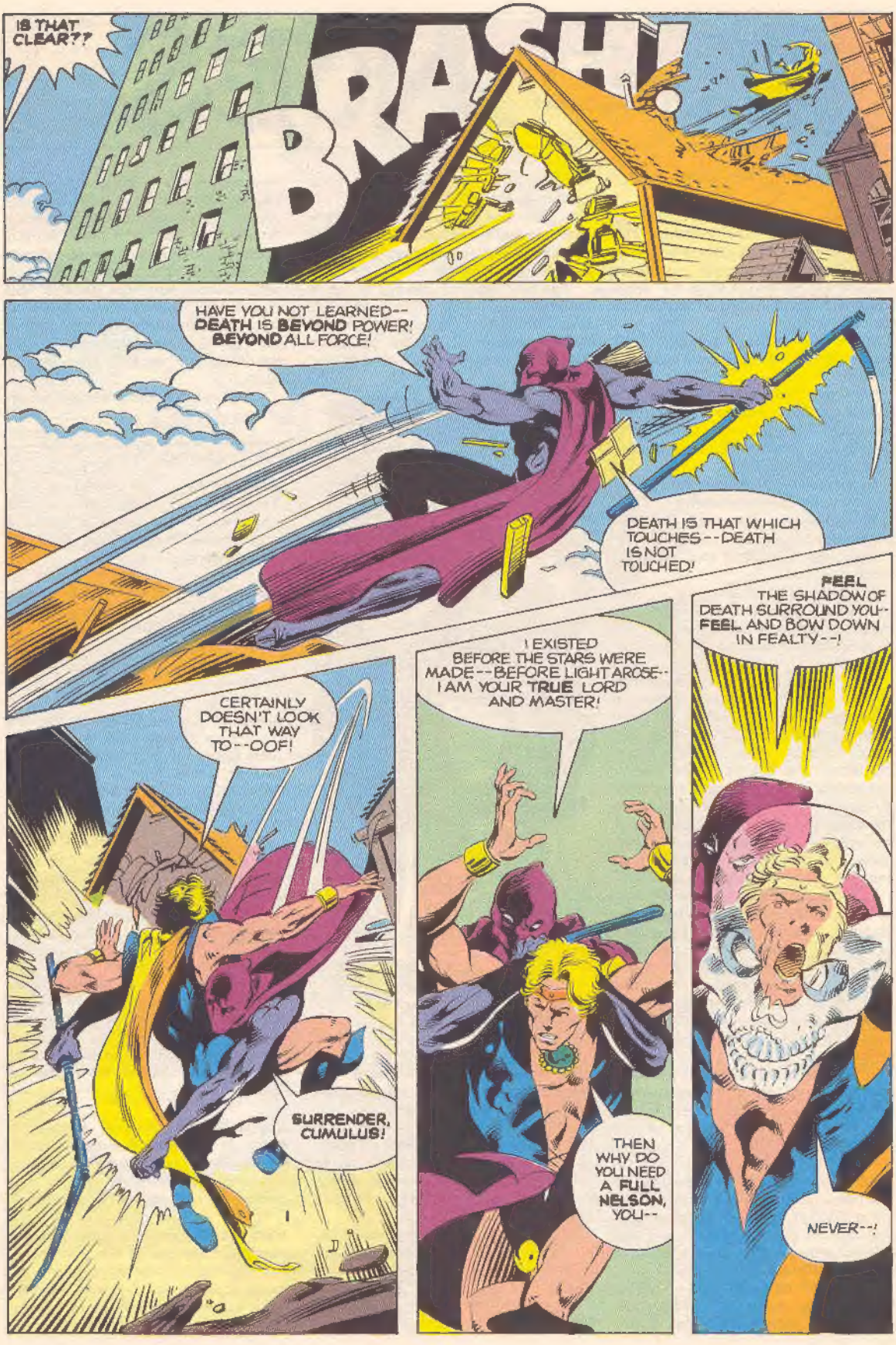
Grimjack #1: At last! The most in-demand comic book spin-off of the decade! Now **John Ostrander** and **Timothy Truman** have an entire monthly book for the Cynosure-spun tales of **Grimjack** and the intergalactic gang down in Munden's Bar!

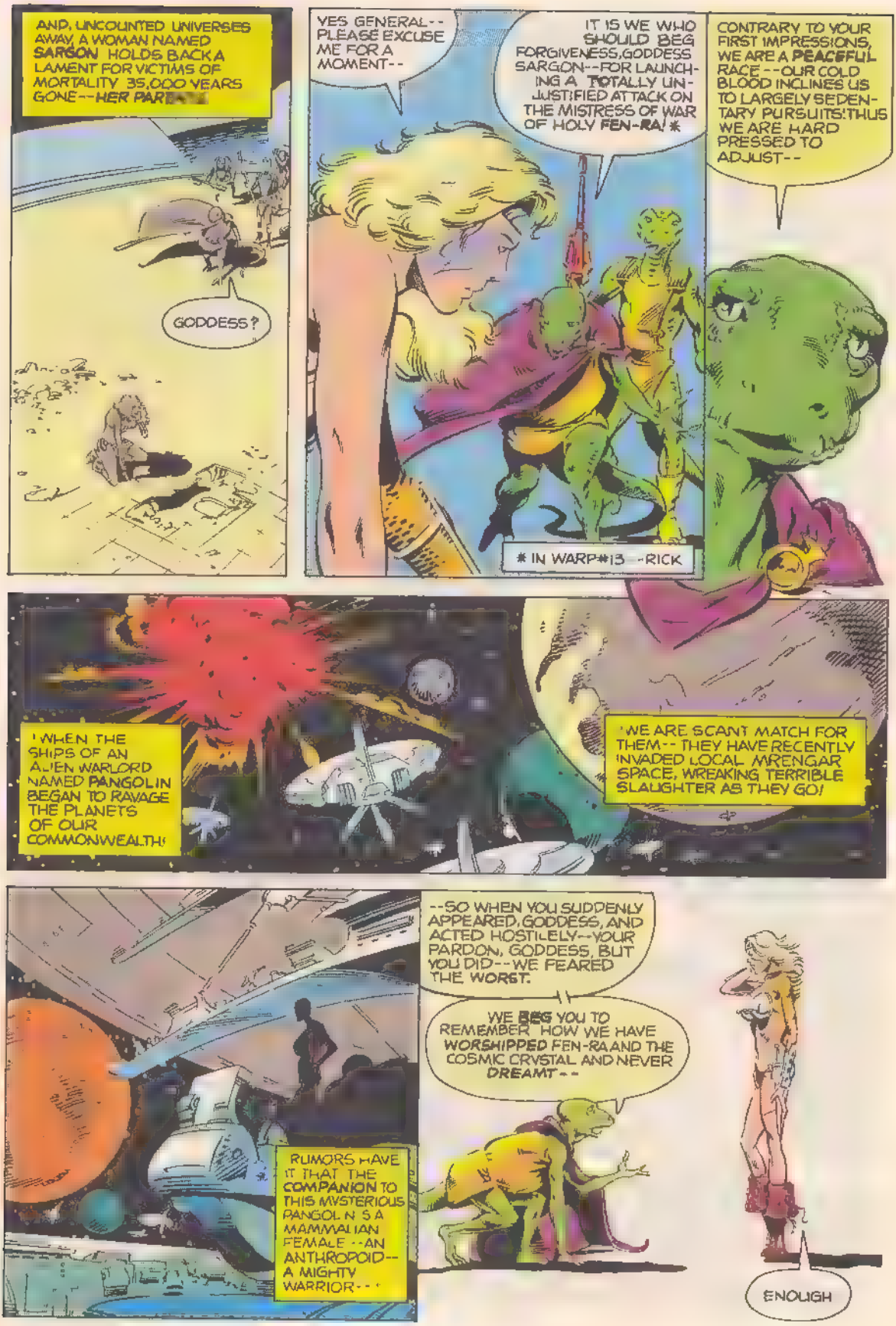
Jon Sable, Freelance #15: Can **Mike Grell's** intrepid hero withstand Castro's army and an entire South American revolution to locate a lost Incan treasure, buried in the middle of "Green Hell?"

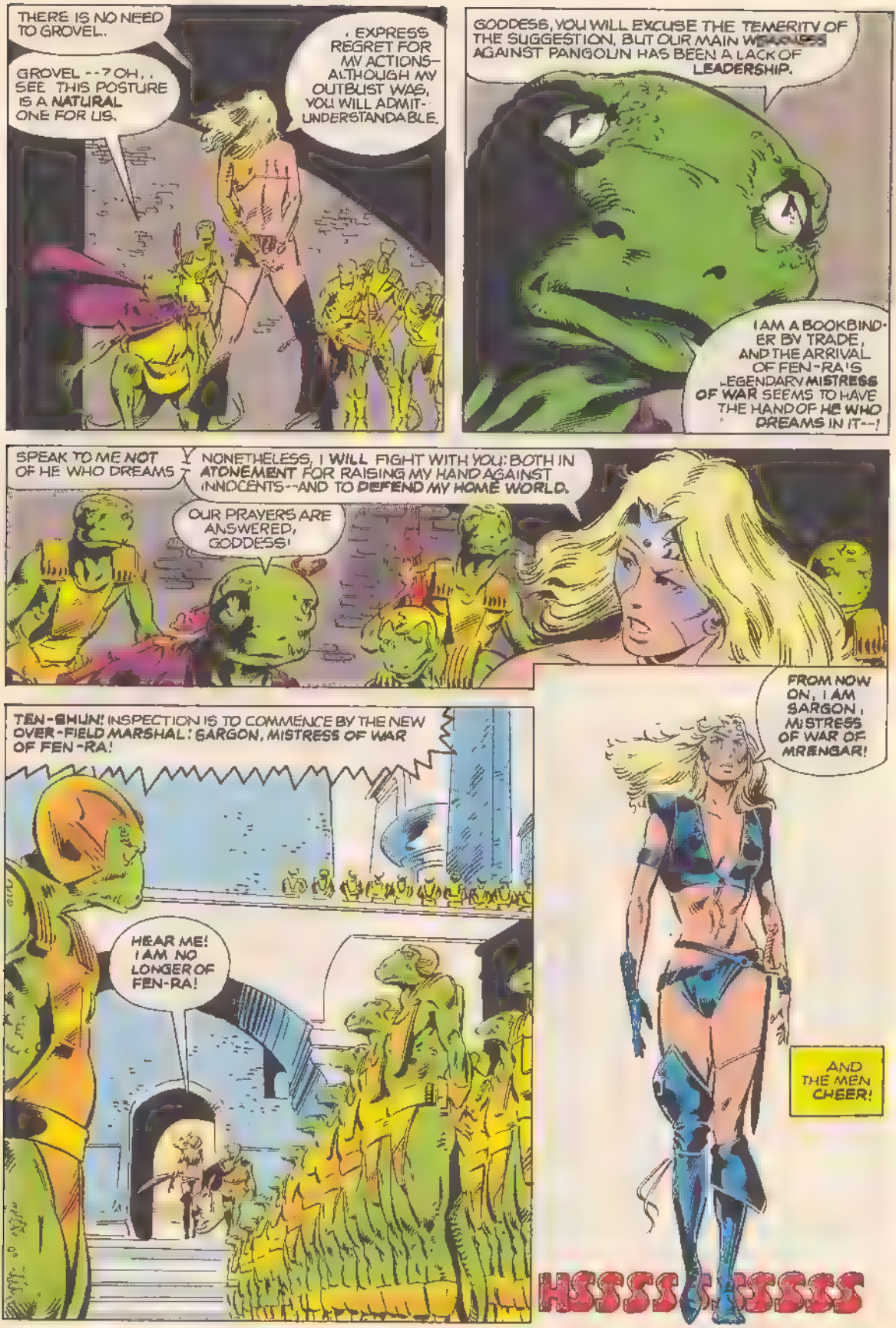
Mars #8: As the World War continues, Morgana and her fellow crew members discover the fate of the original Martian expeditionary force — as the Black Flame pulls himself off the barroom floor in time to do battle in the Nightmare Dimension!

Starslayer #19: Another booklength chiller, as Torin gives new meaning to his streetname! The Starslayer already destroyed the Earth — can he now commit the ultimate act of destruction?

Warp #15: Sargon once again assumes the role of Mistress of War (but not for Fen-Ra), the Outrider faces off with his mortal enemy, and Cumulus must do battle with the Grim Reaper for the sole of his deceased alter-ego!

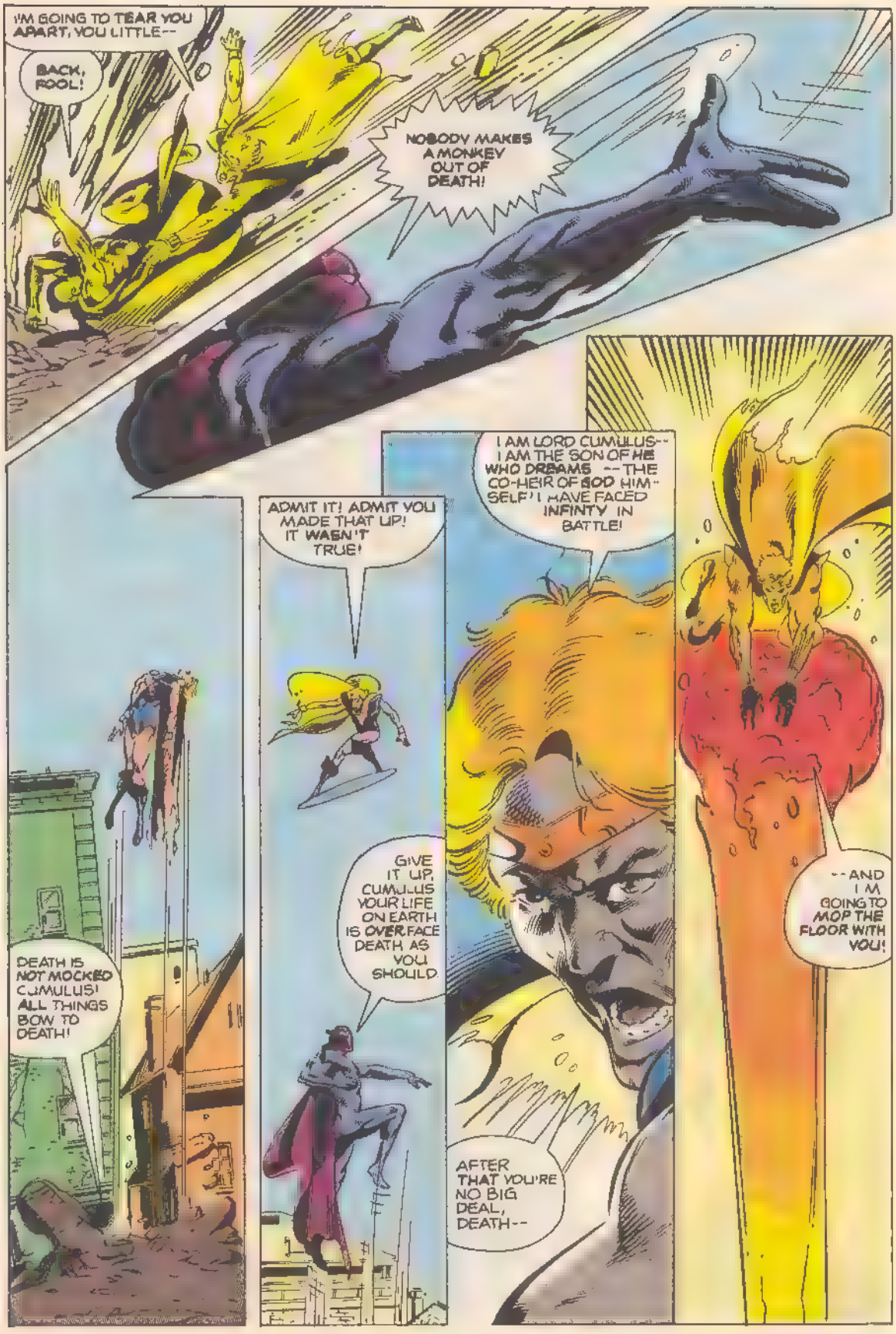

IS THAT CLEAR??
BRASH!
HAVE YOU NOT LEARNED-- DEATH IS BEYOND POWER! BEYOND ALL FORCE!
DEATH IS THAT WHICH TOUCHES--DEATH IS NOT TOUCHED!
FEEL THE SHADOW OF DEATH SURROUND YOU-- FEEL AND BOW DOWN IN FEALTY--!
I EXISTED BEFORE THE STARS WERE MADE--BEFORE LIGHT AROSE-- I AM YOUR TRUE LORD AND MASTER!
CERTAINLY DOESN'T LOOK THAT WAY TO--OOF!
SURRENDER, CUMULUS!
THEN WHY DO YOU NEED A FULL NELSON, YOU--
NEVER--!

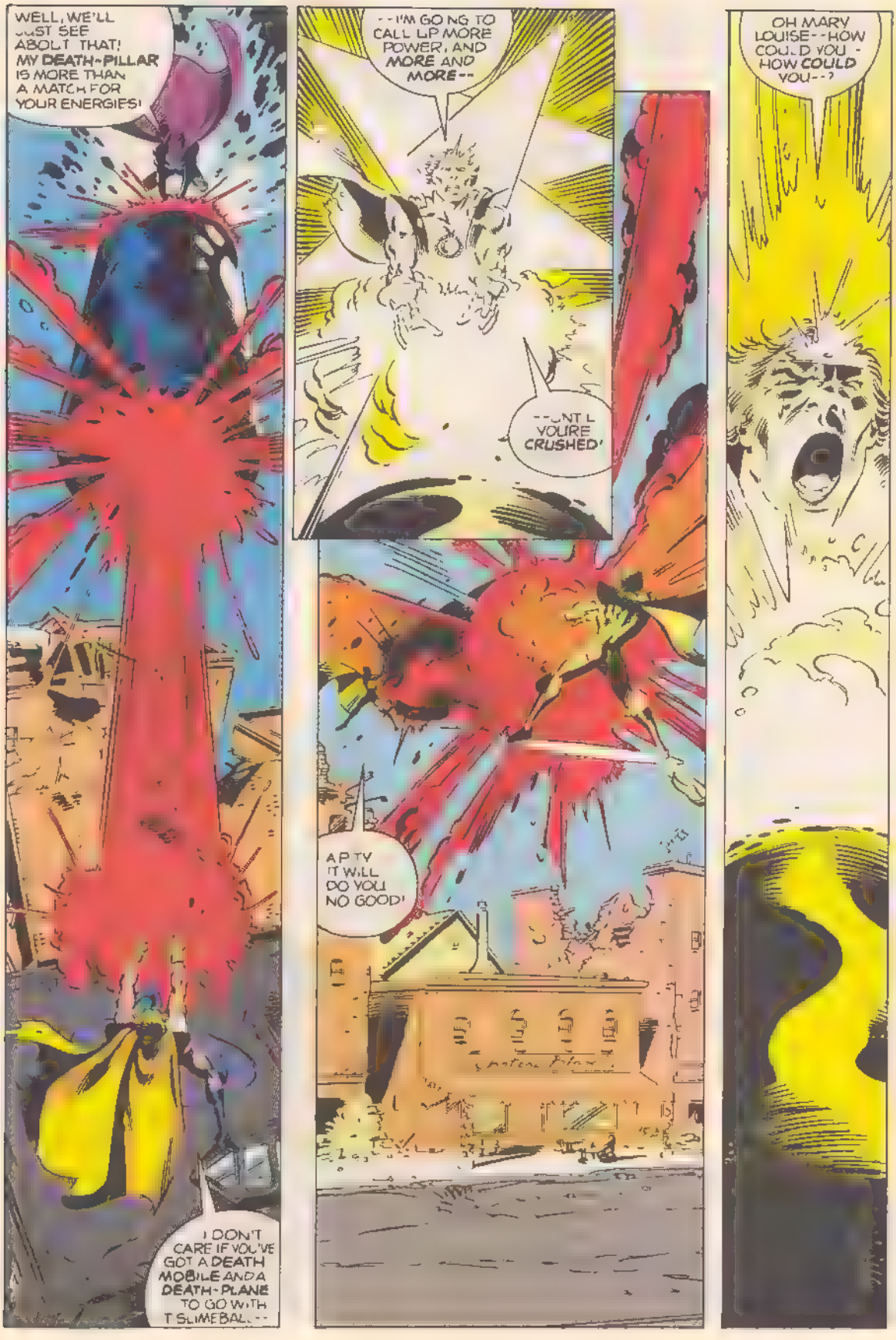

AND, UNCOUNTED UNIVERSES AWAY, A WOMAN NAMED SARGON HOLDS BACK A LAMENT FOR VICTIMS OF MORTALITY 35,000 YEARS GONE--HER PAR
GODDESS?
YES GENERAL--PLEASE EXCUSE ME FOR A MOMENT--
IT IS WE WHO SHOULD BEG FORGIVENESS, GODDESS SARGON--FOR LAUNCHING A TOTALLY UNJUSTIFIED ATTACK ON THE MISTRESS OF WAR OF HOLY FEN-RA! *
CONTRARY TO YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS, WE ARE A PEACEFUL RACE--OUR COLD BLOOD INCLINES US TO LARGELY SEDENTARY PURSUITS! THUS WE ARE HARD PRESSED TO ADJUST--
* IN WARP#13 --RICK
"WHEN THE SHIPS OF AN ALIEN WARLORD NAMED PANGOLIN BEGAN TO RAVAGE THE PLANETS OF OUR COMMONWEALTH!
"WE ARE SCANT MATCH FOR THEM--THEY HAVE RECENTLY INVADED LOCAL MRENGAR SPACE, WREAKING TERRIBLE SLAUGHTER AS THEY GO!
--SO WHEN YOU SUDDENLY APPEARED, GODDESS, AND ACTED HOSTILELY--YOUR PARDON, GODDESS, BUT YOU DID--WE FEARED THE WORST.
WE BEG YOU TO REMEMBER HOW WE HAVE WORSHIPPED FEN-RA AND THE COSMIC CRYSTAL AND NEVER DREAMT--
RUMORS HAVE IT THAT THE COMPANION TO THIS MYSTERIOUS PANGOLIN IS A MAMMALIAN FEMALE--AN ANTHROPOID--A MIGHTY WARRIOR--!
ENOUGH

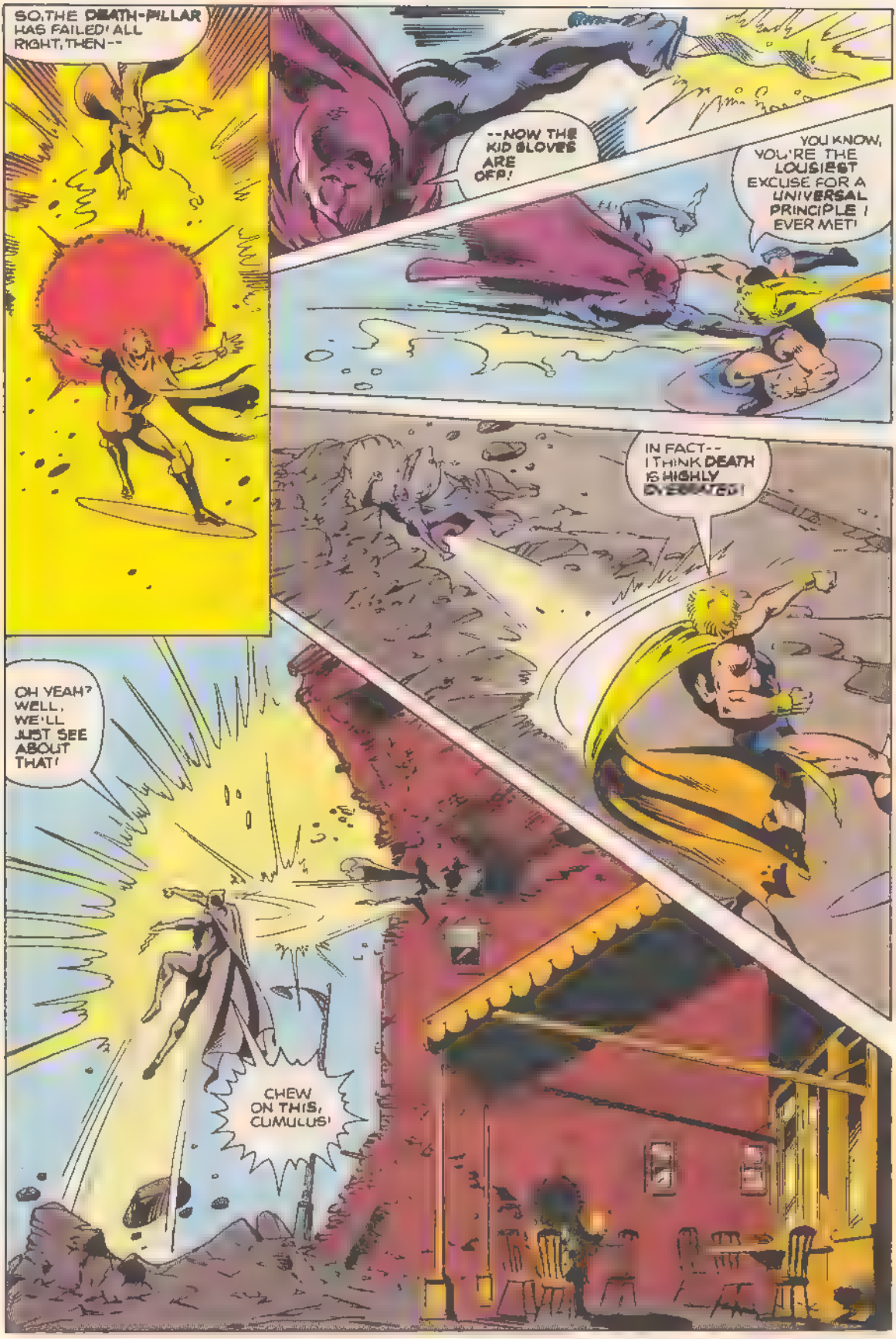

THERE IS NO NEED TO GROVEL.
GROVEL --? OH, . SEE THIS POSTURE IS A NATURAL ONE FOR US.
. EXPRESS REGRET FOR MY ACTIONS— ALTHOUGH MY OUTBURST WAS, YOU WILL ADMIT— UNDERSTANDABLE.
GODDESS, YOU WILL EXCUSE THE TEMERITY OF THE SUGGESTION, BUT OUR MAIN WEAKNESS AGAINST PANGOLIN HAS BEEN A LACK OF LEADERSHIP.
I AM A BOOKBINDER BY TRADE, AND THE ARRIVAL OF FEN-RA'S LEGENDARY MISTRESS OF WAR SEEMS TO HAVE THE HAND OF HE WHO DREAMS IN IT--!
SPEAK TO ME NOT OF HE WHO DREAMS
NONETHELESS, I WILL FIGHT WITH YOU: BOTH IN ATONEMENT FOR RAISING MY HAND AGAINST INNOCENTS--AND TO DEFEND MY HOME WORLD.
OUR PRAYERS ARE ANSWERED, GODDESS!
TEN-SHUN! INSPECTION IS TO COMMENCE BY THE NEW OVER-FIELD MARSHAL: SARGON, MISTRESS OF WAR OF FEN-RA!
HEAR ME! I AM NO LONGER OF FEN-RA!
FROM NOW ON, I AM SARGON, MISTRESS OF WAR OF MRENGAR!
AND THE MEN CHEER!
HSSSS SSSSS

WHILE, BACK ON EARTH --
THE DEATH'S HEAD SURROUNDS YOU, CUMULUS! YOU WILL FEEL ALL THE POWER DRAINED FROM YOUR DYING SHELL--
--AND YOU WILL SEE --
--WHAT DEATH WANTS YOU TO SEE!
NO, IT'S MY MARY LOUISE-- AND THAT GODDAM SHRINK!
AND THAT'S NOT ALL, BUSTER!
"LISTEN AS I TURN UP THE VOLUME"!
--THINK YOU CAN TELL ME WHAT YOUR FEELINGS ARE FOR DAVID RIGHT NOW?
IT'S BEEN VERY HARD, VICTOR-- I LOVED DAVID VERY MUCH AND I GUESS I STILL DO, BUT HE BELONGS TO ANOTHER WORLD NOW--
AND NOT JUST 'FENRA', EH?
PLEASE, VICTOR, DON'T MAKE FUN!
HE HAS THE POWER TO DO THINGS-- TO BE THINGS I CAN'T IMAGINE--
--OR WANT. EVEN AFTER TWO DAYS IN CHICAGO, I GOT DESPERATE TO GO BACK HOME, AND TO BE MARRIED TO A--A SUPERHERO?
AND YET, HE'S STILL DAVID--!
MARY LOUISE--YOU NEVER HAVE TO STOP LOVING ANYBODY--
I KNOW, VICTOR--AND I'VE BEEN THINKING--
NO!! GET AWAY FROM HER, YOU SLIMY--!
DON'T SAY IT, MARY LOUISE-- DON'T SAY IT--!

I DIDN'T WANT TO PRESSURE YOU--
YOU DIDN'T, VICTOR--THE ENGAGEMENT IS STILL ON. I JUST HAVE TO THINK OF A WAY TO TELL DAVID--!
I'M SURE HE'LL TAKE IT--LIKE A HERO MARY LOUISE--!
YOU SON OF A--!! NO!!!
NO!!!
IT'S A DAMNED LIE! A LIE!
DEATH IS TRUTH, CUMULUS! DEATH IS--
--OOF!
AND AS FOR YOU, YOU MISERABLE--
I'M GOING TO MURDER YOU FOR THAT!


I'M GOING TO TEAR YOU APART, YOU LITTLE--
BACK, FOOL!
NOBODY MAKES A MONKEY OUT OF DEATH!
I AM LORD CUMULUS-- I AM THE SON OF HE WHO DREAMS -- THE CO-HEIR OF GOD HIM-SELF! I HAVE FACED INFINTY IN BATTLE!
ADMIT IT! ADMIT YOU MADE THAT UP! IT WASN'T TRUE!
--AND I'M GOING TO MOP THE FLOOR WITH YOU!
GIVE IT UP, CUMULUS YOUR LIFE ON EARTH IS OVER. FACE DEATH AS YOU SHOULD
DEATH IS NOT MOCKED CUMULUS! ALL THINGS BOW TO DEATH!
AFTER THAT YOU'RE NO BIG DEAL, DEATH--

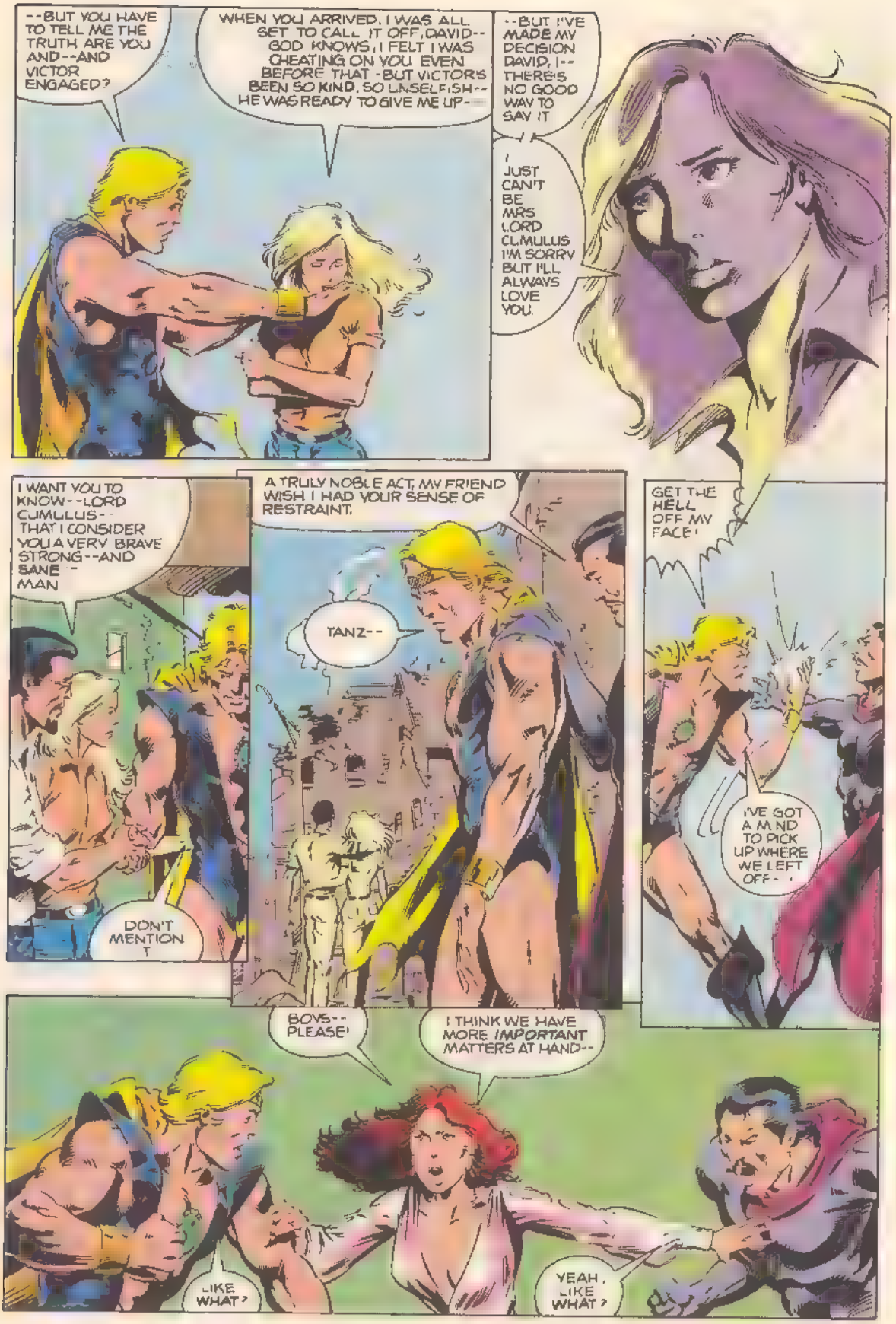

WELL, WE'LL JUST SEE ABOUT THAT! MY DEATH-PILLAR IS MORE THAN A MATCH FOR YOUR ENERGIES!
I DON'T CARE IF YOU'VE GOT A DEATH MOBILE AND A DEATH-PLANE TO GO WITH T SLIMEBAL---
--I'M GO NG TO CALL UP MORE POWER, AND MORE AND MORE--
--UNTIL YOU'RE CRUSHED!
APTY IT WILL DO YOU NO GOOD!
OH MARY LOUISE--HOW COULD YOU - HOW COULD YOU--?


SO, THE DEATH-PILLAR HAS FAILED! ALL RIGHT, THEN--
--NOW THE KID GLOVES ARE OFF!
YOU KNOW, YOU'RE THE LOUSIEST EXCUSE FOR A UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLE I EVER MET!
IN FACT-- I THINK DEATH IS HIGHLY OVERRATED!
OH YEAH? WELL, WE'LL JUST SEE ABOUT THAT!
CHEW ON THIS, CUMULUS!

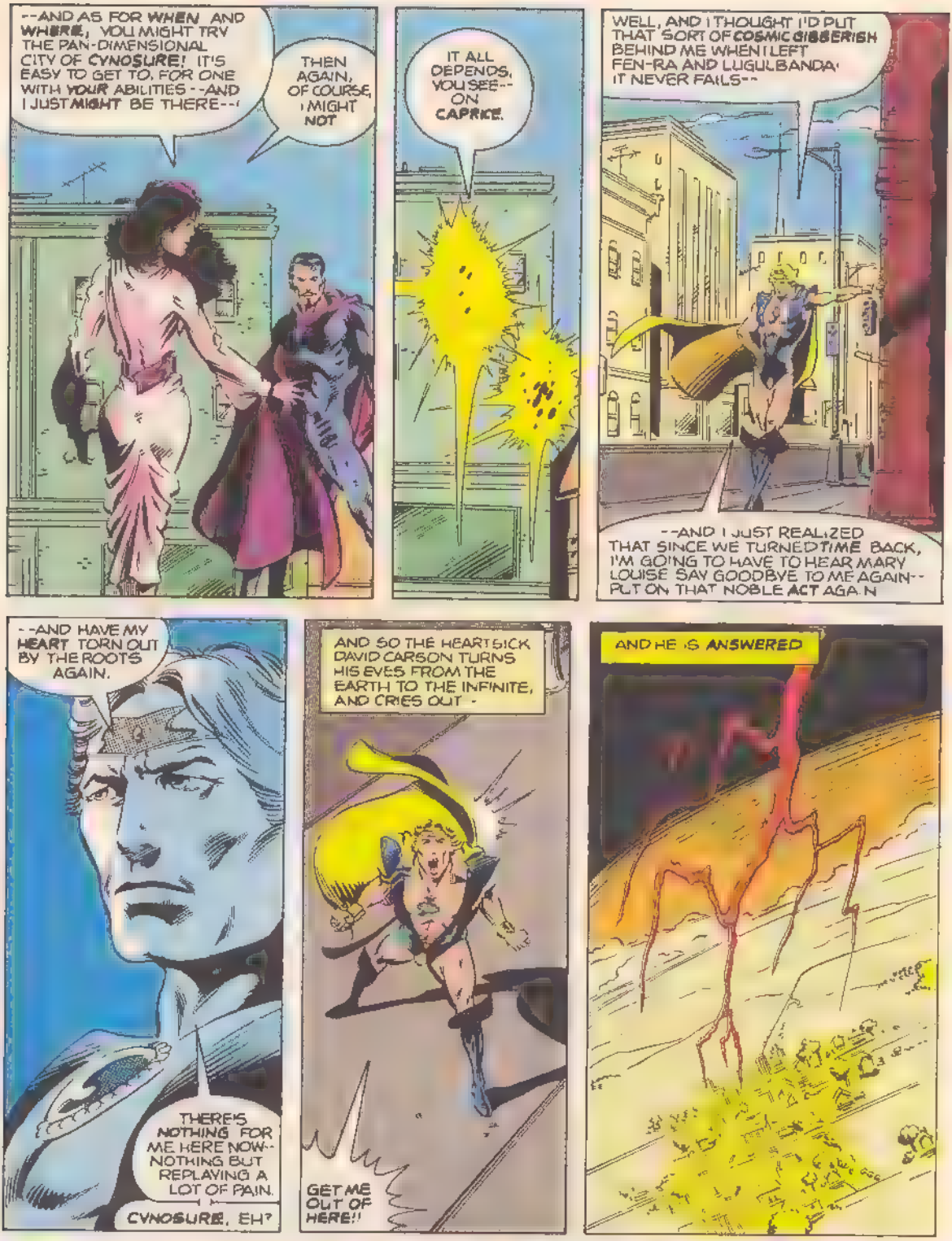
I'VE CHEWED ON IT-- AND SPIT IT OUT! AND NOW--!
YOU FIGHT A LOSING BATTLE CUMULUS! FOR--
DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S ENOUGH?
YOU! THEN IT'S TOO LATE...
IT'S BEEN TOO LATE FOR A LONG TIME.
HUH? WHAT?
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE? HE JUST STOPS--LIKE THAT?
AND WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?

I MEAN -- UH, EXCUSE ME. I'M SORRY I YELLED, BUT WHO-- WHAT--
NUTS
MY NAME'S DAVID CARSON--, ER, LORD CUMULUS, AND I'M-- THAT IS --MMMPH--
YES, AND MY NAME'S CAPRICE. COME OVER HERE --BOTH OF YOU. COFFEE'S ON THE TABLE
UH--, I DON'T DRINK COFFEE--
TEA THEN. HAVE A SEAT - DON'T BE NERVOUS.
LET'S TALK...

JESUS H.-- LOOKS LIKE WE CAN'T TAKE YOU ANY FARTHER, FOLKS--!
MISS BIGELOW, DR VIVIAN- PLEASE TRY TO REASON WITH THIS LORD CALCULUS OF YOURS-- WE, UH, DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO USE FORCE--!
WE UNDERSTAND, HARRY
HURRY VICTOR! DAVID MAY BE IN TROUBLE--!
OUTSIDE OF MUSCLE CRAMPS I DON'T SEE WHAT FROM--!
DON'T MAKE FUN, VICTOR--DAVID MUST BE UP AGAINST SOMEONE WITH TREMENDOUS POWER--!
"BUT WHO COULD THAT POSSIBLY BE?"
--DEATH INCARNATE? WHAT A SILLY NOTION— NO. THIS IS TANZ, A YOUNG MAN WHO FELL IN LOVE WITH ME ABOUT TEN THOUSAND YEARS AGO AND HAS BEEN FOLLOWING ME AROUND EVER SINCE.
I KNOW IT'S FOOLISH- TRAIPSING AROUND THE MULTIVERSE KILLING OFF YOUR FUTURE LOVERS - BUT I ONLY DO IT BECAUSE I CARE.
WAIT A SEC--FUTURE LOVERS? WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY--
DAVID! DAVID! THANK GOODNESS!
WHEN THE POLICE CAME TO GET US, WE THOUGHT YOU WERE IN TERRIBLE DANGER! I WAS SO WORRIED--!
NO, EVERYTHING'S UH, ALL RIGHT NOW, MARV LOUISE--


--BUT YOU HAVE TO TELL ME THE TRUTH ARE YOU AND--AND VICTOR ENGAGED?
WHEN YOU ARRIVED, I WAS ALL SET TO CALL IT OFF, DAVID-- GOD KNOWS, I FELT I WAS CHEATING ON YOU EVEN BEFORE THAT -BUT VICTOR'S BEEN SO KIND, SO UNSELFISH-- HE WAS READY TO GIVE ME UP--
--BUT I'VE MADE MY DECISION DAVID, I-- THERE'S NO GOOD WAY TO SAY IT
I JUST CAN'T BE MRS LORD CUMULUS I'M SORRY BUT I'LL ALWAYS LOVE YOU.
I WANT YOU TO KNOW--LORD CUMULUS-- THAT I CONSIDER YOU A VERY BRAVE STRONG--AND SANE -- MAN
DON'T MENTION IT
A TRULY NOBLE ACT, MY FRIEND WISH I HAD YOUR SENSE OF RESTRAINT.
TANZ--
GET THE HELL OFF MY FACE!
I'VE GOT A MIND TO PICK UP WHERE WE LEFT OFF--!
BOYS-- PLEASE!
I THINK WE HAVE MORE IMPORTANT MATTERS AT HAND--
LIKE WHAT?
YEAH, LIKE WHAT?

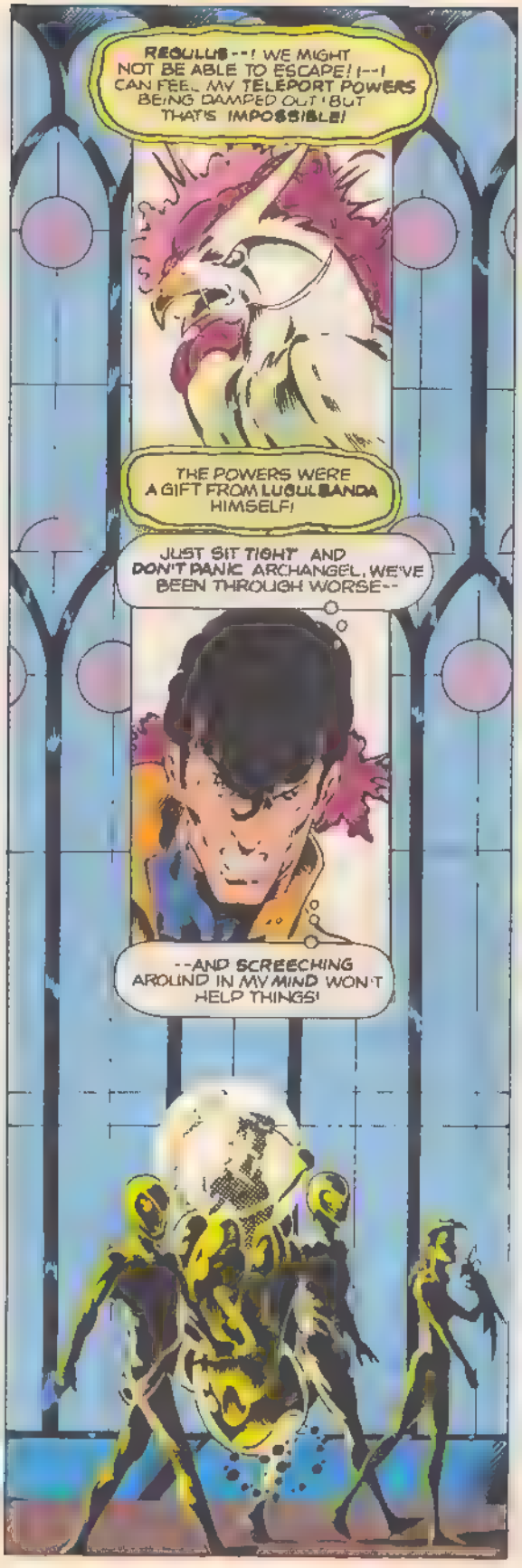
--LIKE THIS TOWN THAT YOU NEARLY LEVELLED--! IF THE TWO OF YOU BEND THE TEMPORAL CURRENTS A LITTLE, YOU CAN UNDO THE DAMAGE!
OK, BUT I THOUGHT SUCH MAJOR CHANGES WERE BEYOND ANYONE'S POWER!
"WELL, YOU NEVER KNOW UNTIL YOU TRY DO YOU?"!
EITHER I'M GETTING BETTER AT THIS, OR--
--YOU! CAN'T YOU EVER LET US DO ANYTHING BY OURSELVES?
WHO, ME?
AND NOW I MUST DASH
WAIT! WHAT'S ALL THIS "FUTURE LOVER" STUFF? WHO ARE YOU? WHERE DO YOU COME FROM? WHAT--
LORD CUMULUS--
YOU DO FASCINATE ME YOU ARE THE ONE WHO IS REALLY TWO, WHO HAS BEEN THREE AND WHO BECOMES NONE--
-- AND YOU HAVE NICE EYES.
WAIT! WHERE ARE YOU GOING? WHEN WILL I SEE YOU AGAIN--?
GOODBYE, LORD CUMULUS--

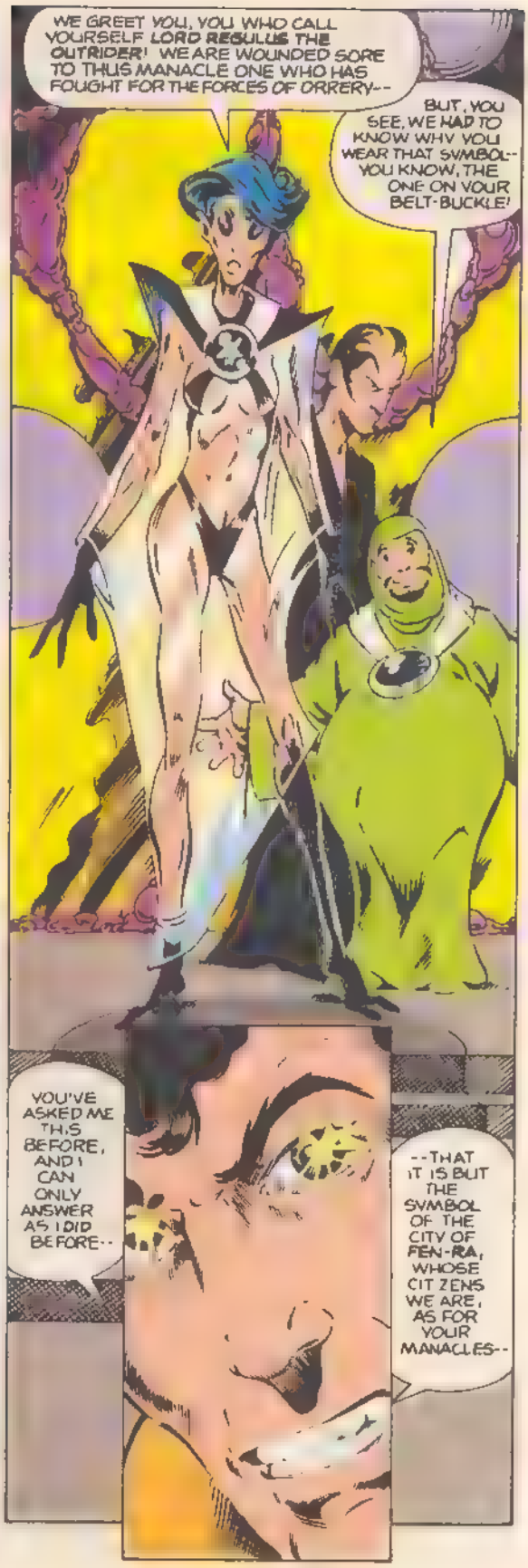


NEXT ISSUE:
THE MASTER PLAN OF PRINCE CHAOS! SCIENCE, SORCERY, ANGELS WITH MACHINE GUNS! BE THERE FOR--

A NIGHT IN CYNOSURE!

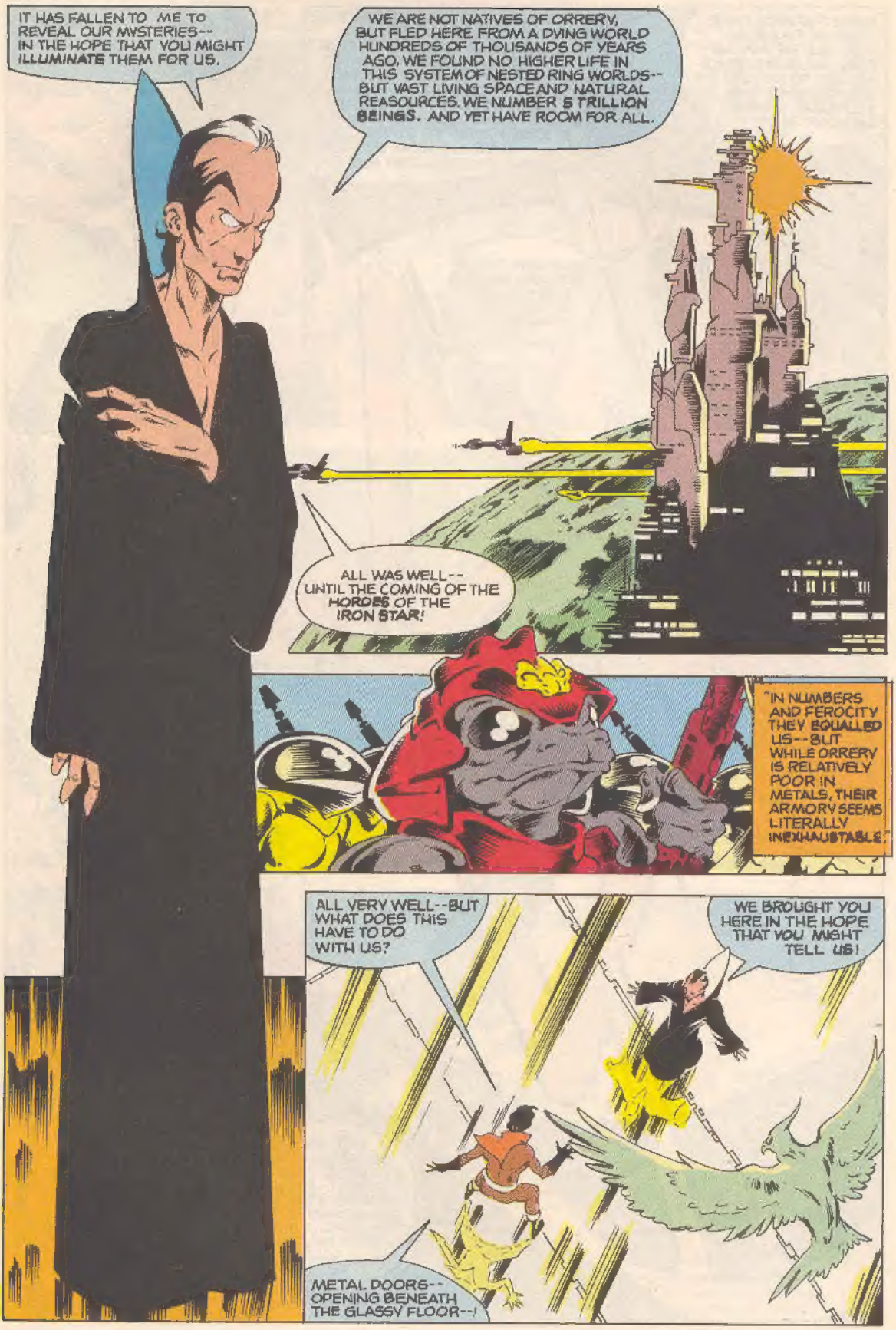
OUTRIDER
PETER B. GILLIS — SCRIPTER
HILARY BARTA — INKS
JANICE COHEN — COLORS
BILL WILLINGHAM — PENCILS
RICK TAYLOR — LETTERS
RICK OLIVER — EDITOR
"OF ALL THE UNGRATEFUL--!"
"WE COME TO THE AID OF THE PEOPLE OF THIS STRANGE STAR SYSTEM--ORRERY AND INSTEAD OF HONORING US, THEY CLAP US IN THESE IONIC RESTRAINTS!"
"WELL, YOU CAN'T TRUST ANYONE NOWADAYS."
By This Sign...


REGULUS--! WE MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO ESCAPE! I--I CAN FEEL MY TELEPORT POWERS BEING DAMPED OUT! BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
THE POWERS WERE A GIFT FROM LUCIFUGE ROFOCALE HIMSELF!
JUST SIT TIGHT AND DON'T PANIC ARCHANGEL, WE'VE BEEN THROUGH WORSE--
--AND SCREECHING AROUND IN MY MIND WON'T HELP THINGS!


WE GREET YOU, YOU WHO CALL YOURSELF LORD REGULUS THE OUTRIDER! WE ARE WOUNDED SORE TO THUS MANACLE ONE WHO HAS FOUGHT FOR THE FORCES OF ORRERY--
BUT, YOU SEE, WE HAD TO KNOW WHY YOU WEAR THAT SYMBOL--YOU KNOW, THE ONE ON YOUR BELT-BUCKLE!
YOU'VE ASKED ME THIS BEFORE, AND I CAN ONLY ANSWER AS I DID BEFORE--
--THAT IT IS BUT THE SYMBOL OF THE CITY OF FEN-RA, WHOSE CITIZENS WE ARE, AS FOR YOUR MANACLES--

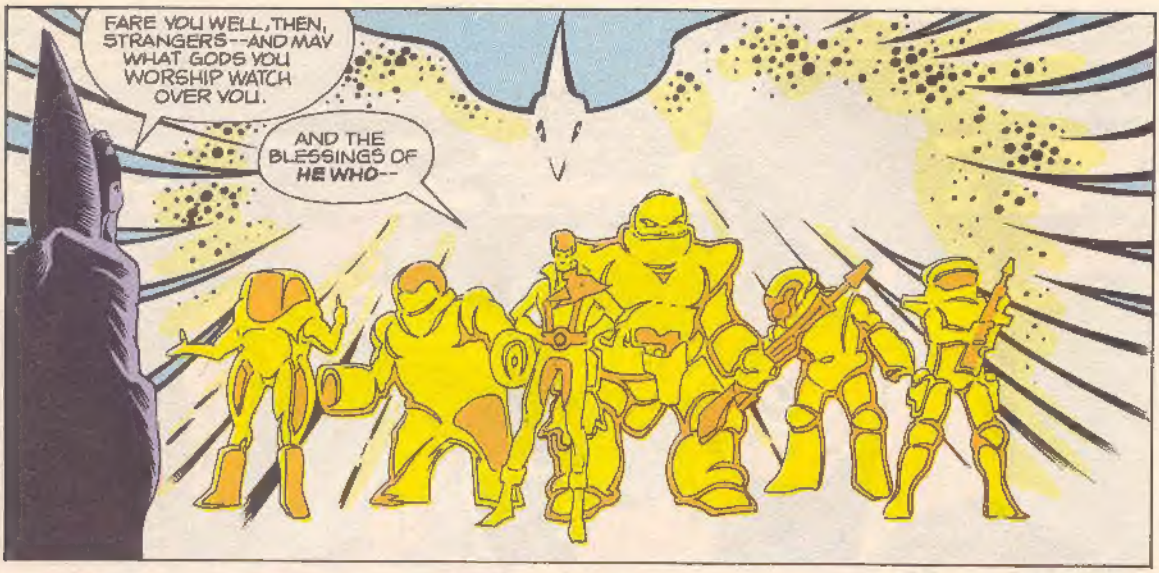
I ASSURE YOU THEY INCONVENIENCED ME ONLY SLIGHTLY.
YOU'LL FORGIVE US FOR OUR CONTINUED ASSERTIVENESS, BUT WE HAVE NEVER HEARD OF A PLACE CALLED FEN RA'. THEREFORE WE PROPOSE A TEST OF YOUR INGENUOUSNESS--?
YOU WILL NOT BE HARMED, BUT WE MUST KNOW.
OPEN THE DOORS!
RELEASE THE BIRD--IT MUST PASS THROUGH AS WELL.
MY LORD--I CAN'T--!
AFTER RUNNING AROUND ON THE SURFACE OF A STAR, YOU'RE AFRAID OF THAT?
YOU MUST PASS THROUGH THERE--THROUGH THE BODY OF FLAME--
--FOR HERS IS ALSO THE BODY OF SORROW--AND OF TRUTH!
NO IT'S SOMETHING ELSE

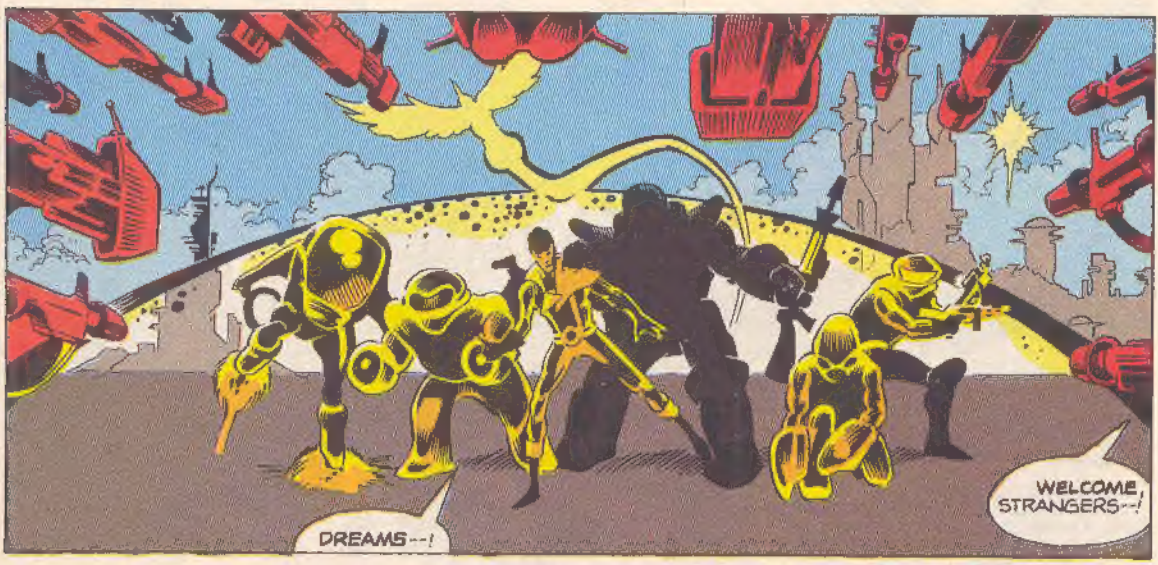
WE WILL SUPPLY YOU WITH A PROTECTIVE SHIELD--
NO.
WE OF FEN-RA HAVE OUR OWN PROTECTIONS AGAINST MINOR OSTACLES...
COME, MILADY, WE--
REGULUS, I FEEL--
REGULUS WHAT IS THIS?
CHRISEYDE! HAS THE CURSE BEEN LIFTED??
CHRISEYDE!
GET AWAY FROM ME YOU BASTARD!!
MY LADY, I--
GO TO HELL, OUTRIDER!
DAMN YOU, CHRISEYDE DAMN YOU!
IT IS OVER YOU HAVE PASSED.
THERE IS GREAT SORROW, AND PAIN-- BUT NO EVIL


IT HAS FALLEN TO ME TO REVEAL OUR MYSTERIES-- IN THE HOPE THAT YOU MIGHT ILLUMINATE THEM FOR US.
WE ARE NOT NATIVES OF ORRERY, BUT FLED HERE FROM A DYING WORLD HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO. WE FOUND NO HIGHER LIFE IN THIS SYSTEM OF NESTED RING WORLDS-- BUT VAST LIVING SPACE AND NATURAL REASOURCES. WE NUMBER 5 TRILLION BEINGS. AND YET HAVE ROOM FOR ALL.
ALL WAS WELL-- UNTIL THE COMING OF THE HORDES OF THE IRON STAR!
"IN NUMBERS AND FEROCITY THEY EQUALLED US--BUT WHILE ORRERY IS RELATIVELY POOR IN METALS, THEIR ARMORY SEEMS LITERALLY INEXHAUSTABLE."
ALL VERY WELL--BUT WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH US?
WE BROUGHT YOU HERE IN THE HOPE THAT YOU MIGHT TELL US!
METAL DOORS-- OPENING BENEATH THE GLASSY FLOOR--!

WHEN OUR RACE CAME HERE WE FOUND NO LIFE BUT WE DID FIND--THIS. ALL OUR SCIENCE HAS YET TO FATHOM IT--YET YOU WEAR THE SELFSAME SYMBOL ON YOUR BELT!
THE FLAME YOU WALKED THROUGH WAS NO MERE APPARITION BUT WHAT REMAINS OF OUR GREATEST SCIENTIST, WHO SOUGHT TO MAKE CONTACT WITH THE CRYSTAL, THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO! IT SCATTERED HER MOLECULES--AND WE WERE FORCED TO STABILIZE HER IN A HIGH-ENERGY PLASMA MATRIX!
IN SHORT, THERE IS POWER BEYOND OUR KEN HERE. DO YOU HAVE THE KEY?
MY LORD! IT ALL MAKES SENSE NOW! WHY I WAS DAMPED--THE FATE OF THE WOMAN--THE DISK IS A MAMMOTH TELEPORT DEVICE! THE WOMAN ACTIVATED IT IN THE WRONG WAY--BUT IT WOULD BE SIMPLE FOR ME TO ACTIVATE IT PROPERLY!

YOU'RE IN LUCK, PRIEST! WE DO KNOW WHAT THIS THING IS--AND IT JUST MIGHT TURN THE TIDE OF THIS WAR!
I WANT YOU TO ASSEMBLE A SMALL FORCE YOUR FINEST TROOPS HERE, IN THIS CHAMBER--
BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! IT WOULD BE SACRILEGE--!
WELL, WE'RE OFFERING YOU THE ALTERNATIVE BETWEEN SACRILEGE AND A CHANCE TO TAKE YOUR WAR TO THE HEART OF THE IRON STAR--
WE ARE NOT A SUPERSTITIOUS RACE, OUTRIDER--YOU SHALL HAVE THEM--
ALL RIGHT, ARCH--YOU'VE GOT THE COORDI-NATES, WILL THERE BE ANY PROBLEMS WITH SHIELDS?
"IMMEDIATELY!"
YOU KIDDING? WITH THIS MUCH POWER? WE CAN GO ANYWHERE WE WANT!


FARE YOU WELL, THEN, STRANGERS--AND MAY WHAT GODS YOU WORSHIP WATCH OVER YOU.
AND THE BLESSINGS OF *HE WHO*--


DREAMS--!
WELCOME, STRANGERS--!

I HOPE YOUR JOURNEY HERE WAS A PAINLESS ONE--
--BECAUSE WE'RE ABOUT TO MAKE UP FOR IT!
NEXT: THE DOOR INTO DOOMSDAY!